

Prairieland Community Supported Agriculture
Week 5 - May 30, 2007

Vegetables Arrive In Earnest

It's taken longer this year than usual due to the odd cold spells late in the season, but today the shares are beginning to size up. The cold hasn't been the only thing working against the shares this season. Today, you are getting five heads of broccoli. Before you panic, note that due to the heat and dryness they are floret-sized instead of their normal, saucer-sized selves. Unfortunately the heat will not allow the Moores to wait to see if the heads size up any more now that the farm has received a few sprinkles of rain. Broccoli doesn't like heat and will flower in high temperatures like those we are currently experiencing. To combat the heat and dryness, Jim and Wes are burying waterlines alongside the second plantings of green beans to ensure that they are not moisture starved. They also are laying black plastic in some parts of the field to try to hold additional moisture. Keep your fingers crossed for significant rainfall this week.

In Your Share Today:

Broccoli, bok choy/mei qing choy, red romaine lettuce, basil, green onions, red radishes

Bags and Totebags

Now that the shares are expanding, you may want a big bag to carry them in. If you are interested in ordering a totebag, please call 355-6279 or email info@prairielandcsa.org. We only need 24 more to complete the order with Weiskamp. For more details, see <http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa/totebag.html>

Going On Vacation?

If you know you will be traveling and won't have anyone picking up your share, please let us know so that we can pull it for PCSA's charitable distribution.

Recipes and Storage Tips:

Broccoli, bok choy, and green onions are great together in a stir fry. See the Basic Stir-Fried Vegetables recipe on page 34 of Recipes from America's Small Farms. Use one of the sauces listed, or your favorite bottled sauce. Add some thinly sliced basil if you opt for the Asian Sauce or are using a favorite Thai sauce.

Stir-Fried Mei Qing Choi with Garlic

1 1/2 lb. bok choy, cut off bottom of head where majority of leaves join stem and cut remaining stems and leaves into 2-inch pieces
2 c water
2 T. peanut oil or canola oil
1 tsp. salt
2-4 garlic cloves minced

Plunge bok choy in boiling water in a large skillet or wok until tender crisp, 1 to 2 minutes. Drain and reserve on serving platter. Return pan to heat. Add oil. When oil is

hot, add garlic (it should sizzle). Stir it around. Add salt and reserved bok choy. until it is very hot - look for a wisp of smoke. Add the salt, garlic and bok choy. Stir until coated. Serve.

Note: Mei Qing Choi is often served with slice or whole shitake mushrooms in a clear garlic sauce made with stock thickened with cornstarch.

Asian Noodle Salad

Alternatively, toss cooked rice noodles with prepared Thai noodle sauce or your own favorite recipe. Place over torn lettuce leaves. Garnish with thinly sliced green onions and basil.

Green Onion and Black Bean Sauce for Stir-Fry

This sauce is adapted from Ming Tsai's Simply Ming will keep in the fridge for two weeks and can turn a what am I going to fix for dinner night into something special in a flash. You also can use this sauce on steamed fish or tofu. It is great cooked with equal amounts of cubed silken tofu and ground pork over rice. You can find dry, fermented black beans, as well as ginger, garlic at just about any Asian Market in Champaign: AM-KO 101 E Springfield; Chang's 505 S. Neil; Lee's Oriental Foods 303 Cedar (next to Jerry's IGA on Kirby), and Green Onion, 2020 S. Neil (note: Green Onion carries frozen fermented black beans, aka nato, which can be used, as well). Using the higher range of ingredients will produce a more pungent sauce.

2 T canola oil

2 1/2 – 3 T dry, fermented black beans, coarsely chopped

4 – 5 T minced garlic

4 – 4 1/2 T peeled, minced ginger

1 bunch scallions (grocery store size, not farm size) sliced 1/8 inch thick

1 1/2 to 2 t sambal oelek or hot pepper sauce

1/4 c dry sherry or rice wine (not sweet wine like Mirin)

1 t kosher salt

1/2 t ground black pepper

1/4 c plus 2 T canola oil

Chop all ingredients and have them ready. Heat a heavy skillet or wok over high heat. Add 2 T of the oil and swirl to coat the pan. When you can throw in a green onion ring and the oil bubbles around it, add black beans, garlic, ginger, and scallions. Stir fry until softened, about 2 minutes. Add the pepper sauce and wine and reduce heat to medium. Cook 2 to 3 minutes as liquid is absorbed. Add salt and pepper. Remove from heat and cool for a bit. Add half the mixture to a blender or use a stick blender and measuring cup. Puree until smooth, adding the remaining oil. Stir in remaining mixture and allow to cool completely. Transfer to a jar or container for immediate use or refrigerate for later. Makes 1 1/2 cups. Use 2 1/2 T per pound of stir fry ingredients. Add at the end of cooking.

Questions, comments, or have a recipe you'd like to share? email info@prairielandcsa.org or call 355-6279